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Letter dated 11 May 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement on the events of the last few days at the border between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of Rwanda, issued on 10 May 2004 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Richard **Ryan**
Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 11 May 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English, French and Spanish]

Statement on the events of the last few days at the border between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of Rwanda issued on 10 May 2004 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union

The European Union expresses grave concern at recent reports of an attack apparently led by the Democratic Liberation Forces of Rwanda (FDLR) on Rwandan territory and of an incident involving Rwandan troops said to have taken place on the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The European Union wishes to point out that the presence of any foreign troops from any country whatsoever on the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a violation of international law and an attack on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The European Union believes that the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) should intervene actively as a matter of urgency in order to counter any attempt on the part of FDLR to infiltrate Rwandan territory, with a view to establishing real stability in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The European Union condemns equally strongly the restrictions placed on the free movement through Congolese territory of soldiers of MONUC, which prevent them from fulfilling their mission.

The potential seriousness of the situation in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo compels the European Union to call upon the Congolese and Rwandan Governments to hold direct consultations to prevent any aggravation of the tension and to intensify their efforts to improve relations between the two countries.

The European Union makes a fresh appeal for the highest authorities in Kigali and in Kinshasa to respect scrupulously the spirit of the declaration on good-neighbourly relations which they both signed on 25 September 2003, as well as the Pretoria Agreement of 30 July 2002 and the commitments which they both entered into at the Pretoria meeting on 27 November 2003.

In particular, the European Union would support the establishment by the two countries of a bilateral mechanism for monitoring the border area, backed by MONUC. In that connection, the disarmament and demobilization of the former Rwandan armed forces and Interhamwe combatants are essential in order to resolve the conflict in the region.

The candidate countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, the countries of the stabilization and association process and potential candidates Albania, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and the EFTA countries, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.